scientific evidence. The procedures and decisions used by the country in assessing the risks to food safety or plant and animal health has to be made available to other countries on request. This brings in the transparency in the SPS Measures which discourages countries to use SPS measures as non-tariff barriers.

(d) In order to enhance sanitary and phytosanitary standards of the country's exports, following major steps have been taken:

(i) Certification agencies have been established;

(ii) Export Inspection Councils have been strengthened;

(iii) Capacity building exercise of the exporters through trainings, seminars, etc. have been undertaken;

(iv) Duty free import of equipments such as panels etc. for meeting the SPS Standards have been allowed;

(v) Residue monitoring plans for specified commodities are being carried out;

(vi) compulsory testing regimes have been put in place for certain specified commodities before consignment are exported out; and

(vii) exporters are being given financial assistance for quality testing of certain specified exportable produces.

International diamond trading centre in India

244. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is thinking of setting up of International diamond trading centre in India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that India is the largest buyer of diamond roughs in the world;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government are thinking of allowing FDI in the diamond exploration; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) It is the endeavour of the Government to develop India as an International Diamond Centre.

(d) and (c) Yes, Sir. Import of rough diamonds into India in terms of value during the last three years is as follows:—

US $ in Million

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005* (Provisional)
Net Import	5454.90	7130.09	7,595.31

Source: DGCI & S 'Source: GJEPC

(d) and (c) Foreign Direct Investment Policy envisage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in mining also. For exploration and mining of diamonds and precious stones, Foreign Direct Investment is allowed upto 74% under automatic route.

Export of medicines to America

245. DR. CHHATTRAPAL SINGH LODHA:
PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to export medicines to America;

(b) if so, toe details thereof;

(c) whether there has been any dialogue between the two countries in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V. K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Medicines are being exported to the United States of America and the exports of pharmaceutical products during 2003-04 were more than US $ 230 Million.

(c) and (d) Dialogue between the two countries for trade promotion is a sustained and continuous effort, regular interaction takes place at various levels to expand and diversify trade through different trade promotion measures.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.